

The Fair Havens

Confidence in God

The terrorist attacks this fall have had a profound impact upon the hearts of men. North Americans, who had enjoyed a rather insulated lifestyle, have now experienced firsthand the effects of fear and uncertainty in their daily lives. The lives of the saints, however, are not subject to the vagaries of time and chance. The angel of the Lord continues to encamp round about those who fear Him and delivers them. Though men's hearts fail them for fear over the things coming upon the earth, believers have confidence His angels are orchestrating events that will culminate in the return of our Lord Jesus Christ and the establishment of a new world order that will bring blessing to all families of the earth.

As we await the consummation of all things, daily discipleship may become more challenging. Should economic conditions deteriorate further, the social impact of unemployment, family stress, and market uncertainty may not leave us untouched. How are we to respond as ambassadors of Christ? It is important that we continue to have our gaze fixed upon that city whose builder and maker is God. As strangers and sojourners awaiting a new heaven and a new earth, our hopes and aspirations do not lie in this life. However, we are faced with the reality of living in trying times and it is important that we be prepared to faithfully respond to these challenges. As Paul wrote to the brethren in Philippi, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus". 4:6-7

In this issue of The Fairhavens we have included:

- an exhortation by Bro. Neville Smart *The Fellowship of His Sufferings*, to encourage us to take up our cross and follow Him.
- A new financial stewardship seminar is planned, "Managing God's Money" to help us weather the ups and downs of our personal finances, which are really God's resources.
- The Foundation's terms of reference are also included, with the invitation to utilize Fairhaven's resources to supplement ecclesial support of the health and welfare needs of our members.



Somebody Else?

There's a clever young guy named Somebody Else,
There's nothing this guy can't do.
He is busy from morning till way late at night,
Just substituting for you.

You're asked to do this or you're asked to do that
And what is your ready reply?
Get Somebody Else to do that job,
He'll do it much better than I.

So much to do in this weary old world—
So much and workers so few,
And Somebody Else, all weary and worn,
Is still substituting for you.

The next time you're asked to do something worthwhile,
Just give this ready reply:
If Somebody Else can give time and support,
Then certainly so can I!

Think on These Things

The Fellowship Of His Sufferings

As he is, so are we in this world." In these words the apostle John declares the fundamental principle of Christian living which had been impressed upon him and his fellow apostles by their Lord Himself in a context they were not likely to forget: "Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you." We are children of God and disciples of Jesus as we follow His example, as we share His experiences: only so are we one with Him in any real sense now; only so can we put ourselves in the way of being like Him and one with Him in the day of His glory.

The prophet Isaiah tells us that when the "servant" of the Lord comes into our world He comes as "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief"; that He is stricken and smitten, wounded and bruised, oppressed and afflicted; that "he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter" and "cut off out of the land of the living". Both the testimony and the experience of Jesus confirm the truth of the prophetic witness "that Christ should suffer"; and as we have seen, Jesus specifically points to suffering as an inevitable part of the lot of those who are His: "If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you."

So we should not be surprised to find Peter writing to an early generation of believers concerning the persecutions they were beginning to experience: "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers (Gr. *koinoneite*) of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." "*Partakers* of Christ's sufferings": this is virtually the same word as that used by Paul when he describes himself as having "suffered the loss of all things" that he may know Christ "and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship (Gr. *koinonian*) of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death." Partakers of Christ's sufferings, knowing the fellowship of His sufferings: that is one part of the true disciple's being "as he is" in this world. Any man who suffers for his faith in his very suffering shares (fellowships, partakes of, participates in) the experience of his Lord. As Paul writes to the Colossians: "It is now my joy to suffer for you: for the sake of Christ's body, the church, I am completing what still remains for Christ to suffer in my own person". And we do not need to be reminded of Paul's own grim catalogue of the afflictions through which he entered into the experience, the fellowship, of the sufferings of his Lord: "Are they ministers of Christ? I am more: in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in death oft" – and so on.

So again we should not be surprised to find ourselves suffering physically and materially because of our loyalty to Christ and our desire to know Him, even though that means knowing the fellowship of His

sufferings. We should not be surprised, either, to find ourselves suffering the mental and spiritual distress that is the normal and natural accompaniment of physical pain and material loss. Some of us will know something of this kind of suffering. But many things in our environment today have combined to reduce its incidence and soften its impact in our lives: the relative comfort and peace and complacency of our modern society, for example, and its general apathy and agnosticism, tolerance or indifference in matters of principle and religion. Few of us know more than an infinitesimal part of the physical and material trials through which Paul came to know the fellowship of his Lord's sufferings; probably none of us could make his simple, absolute claim: "I have suffered the loss of all things, that I may win Christ." This is, of course, a situation which could change dramatically if the balance of forces in our world were to undergo the kind of radical upheaval which from time to time has upset the course of history. The essential thing is that, whether such things come upon us or not, we should be in that condition of mental and spiritual oneness with our Lord that would enable us to react to them as those who are truly, from their hearts, "as He is in this world"; as those who could say with Paul: "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."

But more than this is involved in fellowshipping the sufferings of Christ: "I have suffered the loss of all things, that I may know him, and the fellowship of his sufferings, *being made conformable unto his death.*" Here, in this last phrase, we have a kind of further definition of what is essentially involved in fellowshipping the sufferings of Christ. "Being made conformable unto his death", "in growing conformity with his death" (NEB): here is described that condition of life in which we are ready and equipped to suffer faithfully the kind of trials our Lord Himself knew: here, in fact, we apprehend in another aspect and at a deeper level the nature of the sufferings of Christ and what is involved in our partaking of them.

"Conformable unto his death". In his letter to the Romans Paul develops an extended argument detailing the parallels between the death and resurrection of

Christ and the rite of Christian baptism. The Christian is made conformable to the death of Christ in the act of baptism. But baptism is a symbolic act, and, as Paul shows, it can be an empty symbol. It is given reality and significance if it is followed by a life in which the principles it testifies to become alive in a human personality. And the principles it testifies to are the same as are witnessed in the death of Jesus Himself of which it is a figure: the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and its absolute and total repudiation.

To be made conformable to the death of Jesus is then to be acutely sensitive to the sinfulness of sin and to repudiate sin from our very inmost being. And the doing of this, or rather the attempt to do it, is productive of the most acute and painful suffering within our inward man, as it was in the life of our Lord Himself. For in His life the cross was but the final development out of the dying to sin that had been His experience from the beginning; and the temptation in the wilderness and the agonies of Gethsemane give us some insight into the anguish of spirit that characterizes this kind of suffering: "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me...And his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." And this agony, this suffering, we are also called upon to share, to partake in, to fellowship. It is this kind of agony that Paul was experiencing when he wrote so sensitively of the law of sin in his members warring against the law of his mind, and that produced his *cri de coeur* "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

The extremity of this kind of suffering none of us knows. All of us would have to accept the chastening rebuke of the writer to the Hebrews: "Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin". But most of us understand something of the experience that Paul is describing in Romans 7; and it is through our growing awareness of this kind of experience that we grow in conformity with the death of our Lord, and come to know in the secret places of our hearts the fellowship of His sufferings.

There is one other form of suffering which we must know if we would enter significantly into the experience of

our Lord. That is the suffering of compassion – by definition, the entering into the feelings of others, the suffering along with others: the suffering we ourselves experience in coming near to the sorrow and suffering of our fellow men and women; in seeking to understand their needs (especially their mental, emotional and spiritual needs); in seeking to help them with practical aid, with really relevant and worthwhile counsel, or simply with the comforting silence of understanding hearts. We remember that Paul's catalogue of his sufferings for Christ's sake concludes with a reference to "the care of all the churches", and some of us know at least a little of the strains and tensions which this kind of care imposes on us. Our very powers of sympathy and understanding are limited by our own limitations of character and temperament, by our social backgrounds and circumstances, by the kind of intellects we have, by the nature of our past experience, and so on: we have constantly to be trying to extend our capacity for sympathy and understanding over an ever wider field. It is all very exhausting for us. We remember how on one occasion following an act of healing Jesus was aware that "virtue" had gone out of Him; and often our own exercise of compassion leaves us drained dry of all our nervous and spiritual energy.

But whilst there were many occasions when Jesus was wearied *by* the doing of good, He never wearied *of* well-doing: "The Son of man come not to be ministered unto but to minister": "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." And we, if we would know the fellowship of His sufferings, must bear one another's.

"Blessed be God, even the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." In these words is summed up our obligation of compassion to those about us. But Paul's following words have also something to say to us about our own condition and need, and for our own comfort and consolation: "For the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our comfort also abounded by Christ...And our hope of you is steadfast, knowing that as ye are partakers (Gr. koinonoi) of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the comfort."

For when we know Jesus in any significant sense, when in John's phrase we have fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ, we fellowship not only His sufferings but also His joys and consolations. So that in other places in his second letter to Corinth we find Paul able to write of himself and his fellow-believers as "sorrowful, yet always rejoicing...as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things; and again, and especially, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body".

"That the life of Jesus might be made manifest in our body"; here is the essence of our comfort and consolation – that through all the vagaries of our spiritual life, through all our suffering with Christ in our agonising against sin, we are aware of the birth and growth of something in our mortal bodies that is not of our natural selves, that is "like him": in other words that in knowing the fellowship of His sufferings we are indeed increasingly coming to know Him altogether and the power of His resurrection within us and upon us.

And this takes us forward to the contemplation of the great end and consummation of all our fellowshipping of Christ now; as we have read: "Rejoice, inasmuch as ye are *partakers of Christ's sufferings*; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad with exceeding joy."

Or, as Peter puts it in his second letter: "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be *partakers* (Gr. koinonoi again) *of the divine nature*, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust".

"As he is, so are we in this world." and being so now we shall see Him then, in the day of His glory, as He is, and be like Him.

Managing God's Money

A Free Seminar

Saturday, April 6, 2001

Large numbers of Canadians are feeling the pinch. After more than a decade of falling incomes and rising taxes, most consumers simply have less disposable income. But instead of making the necessary and often difficult cuts to their lifestyle, many have plundered their savings and borrowed heavily to meet regular expenses. Simply put, many of us are living beyond our means.

Canadians are now drowning in a sea of debt. Consumers owe some \$200 billion in personal debt – money owing on credit cards, personal lines of credit and loans. A worrisome trend is the growing number of personal bankruptcies and debtor proposals to try to avert bankruptcy. For example, back in 1994 – when Canada was climbing out of recession – we had 54,000 personal bankruptcies and 2,000 debtor proposals under the Bankruptcy & Insolvency Act. Last year – when the economy was booming – 75,000 Canadians declared personal bankruptcy, while 13,000 sought help through debtor proposals.

At the same time, the savings rate for Canadians – historically known as savers – has been falling. Twenty years ago, we saved 17% of our personal disposable income; last year it was 3%.

Canadians carry 40 million Visa and Mastercards and last year owed \$34 billion. One credit counsellor observed, "We have a different culture today. Banks no longer want to offer personal loans because it's cheaper

for them to offer credit through credit cards. Credit cards also net banks greater profits, since, like personal lines of credit, they offer a revolving access to credit that never has to be paid off." Interest rates on bank credit cards can jump as high as 18.4% while retail cards can charge up to a whopping 28.8% on outstanding balances.

Don't be a statistic! If you're starting out in life, and want help in being a prudent steward of the resources God has given you, mark your calendars for April 6th and plan to attend "Managing God's Money" – a free seminar to be held, God willing, in Mississauga, ON and sponsored by the Fairhaven Foundation. Watch for further details early in the new year. Notices will be sent to Ontario Recording Brethren/ Secretaries in February. Although there is no cost to attend, it will be necessary to register in advance, and registrants will be sent a work book to assist them in evaluating their own financial situation, so that the day will be more personally relevant.

*I*t is incredible to see the fervor with which the people of that religion help each other in their wants. They spare nothing. Their first legislator [Jesus] has put it into their heads that they are brethren."

The Greek writer Lucian (AD 120-200) upon observing the warm fellowship of Christians.

*The
Fair
Havens*

The Fairhaven
Christadelphian Foundation
c/o Sister Penny Keeting
Secretary
728 Church Street
Toronto, ON, M4W 2M6

Directors
Bro. Brent Curry
Bro. Clive Daniel, Treasurer
Bro. Alan Ghent, Chair

Sis. Penny Keeting, Secretary
Sis. Marie Klien
Bro. Ian McPhee
Bro. Tom Thorp

Terms of Reference

How can the Fairhaven Christadelphian Charitable Foundation be of assistance to your ecclesia? Are there health and welfare needs in your meeting that require attention, but ecclesial resources are strained or insufficient? The Foundation, operating under the applicable government regulations, may:

- provide grants only to registered charities in Canada, not to individuals
- disperse a certain percentage of our investment income each year, based upon a regulatory formula

Ecclesiastical bodies in Canada may request assistance from the Foundation by following these guidelines:

- Only requests from Arranging Boards can be considered. An individual member of an ecclesia may not make a personal request to the Foundation.
- * Priority is to be given to the welfare needs of Christadelphian elderly, since this reflects the original purpose of Fairhaven House. If additional funds are available after meeting these needs then more general health and welfare needs of the Christadelphian community will be considered; after that, health and welfare needs of the community at large.
- * Requests must be in writing and should confidentially document, the need, the background, the amount of help required and the amount of help being provided by the ecclesia.
- * It is expected that the ecclesia requesting support will also provide funds to assist from its own reserves.
- Requests may be sent to:
The Fairhaven Christadelphian Foundation
c/o Sister Penny Keeting, Secretary
728 Church Street
Toronto, ON, M4W 2M6
- * It is preferable, if possible, that ecclesiastical bodies first address emergency situations, then follow up with a request to the Foundation.
- * The Board of the Foundation will consider requests at its semi-annual meetings in March and September each year. Emergency requests will also be addressed as expeditiously as possible.

Year End Financial Report

Statement Of Revenue,
Expenses And Fund Balance
For The Year Ending
March 31, 2001

Revenue

Investment income	26,997
Grants returned	0
	26,997

Expenses

Grants paid	24,500
Professional	1,391
Other	1,584
	27,475
Net Income (Loss)	(478)
Opening fund balance	508,307
Closing fund balance	507,829

It is important to appreciate that the primary responsibility to meet the welfare needs of our brothers, sisters and young people lies at the ecclesial level, and consequently the Foundation's role is to supplement rather than supplant this ecclesial responsibility. We encourage ecclesiastical bodies to be actively aware of situations where there is a need, extend help, and then approach the Foundation as a funding partner.